

Minutes**Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth****House Interim Committee on****Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs****Meeting Jointly****Thursday, November 15, 2018**

The Senate Interim Committee on Children and Youth and the House Interim Committee on Aging, Children and Youth, Legislative and Military Affairs met jointly on Thursday, November 15, 2018, at 1:30 p.m., at the Ronald McDonald House, 1501 W. 10th St., Capitol View Conference Room, 5th Floor, Little Rock, Arkansas.

Committee members present: Senators Alan Clark and Breanne Davis. **Representatives** Charlene Fite, Chair; Bruce Coleman, Vivian Flowers, Steve Hollowell and Clint Penzo.

Non-committee members present: Representatives James Sorvillo.

Representative Fite called the meeting to order.

Representative Fite recognized Jennifer Long, Executive Director, Children's Protection Center, Children's Advocacy Centers of Arkansas (CAC). Ms. Long discussed the primary focus of the CAC and how their efforts help children who have been abused. CAC started in Alabama in the late 1980's, making its way on a national level, and later being recognized on an International level. Agencies around the world do research to support CAC's mission and the impact it has on every community.

In 2017, over 30,000 cases of physical, sexual and neglect cases were reported in the state of Arkansas. In each county, every community has a multi-disciplinary team and CAC is actively involved within that team to provide the necessary services to respond to child abuse cases. A study has shown that communities that have a CAC have higher conviction rates than communities that do not have a CAC.

CAC funding comes from donations by different organizations, as well as through the state and CAC fundraisers. CAC is looking to provide services to all areas in the state as well as providing more mental health services and updating their equipment to track data and to efficiently and adequately provide the services that advocates need to better service the communities. CAC is asking legislators to support them by providing stronger laws so mandated reporters can continue their efforts along with CAC in helping abused children.

Representative Fite asked that Ms. Long provide a copy of the map that shows the location for all CACs across the state of Arkansas.

Representative Fite recognized Ms. Janell Mason, Executive Director, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Arkansas. Ms. Mason presented the history of the Ronald McDonald House and its efforts in helping families during difficult times as well as the many other charities they provide. There are 366 Ronald McDonald Houses in the world with Arkansas, ranking 27th. The house solely exists on donations from many different organizations as well as grant funding. For every happy meal purchased one penny goes towards the Ronald McDonald House charities. These donations assist in providing families with living arrangements in the Ronald McDonald House for stays up to 45 days, after which they have to reapply for the waiting list. The families are referred to the house via Arkansas Children's Hospital, Baptist Hospital and UAMS. The house also provides complimentary food and linen services sponsored by different vendors in the surrounding Little Rock area.

The Care Mobile Program was founded in 2009, it provides dental services to six counties in Arkansas with the highest free and reduced lunch program participation in elementary schools. The year for this program is 48 weeks and the mobile unit spends 2 weeks at a time in each county providing dental services and education. There are 54 Care Mobiles in the world, providing services that includes vision, diabetes and other health related issues.

Without any further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m. and Ms. Mason provided a tour of the Ronald McDonald House following the meeting.